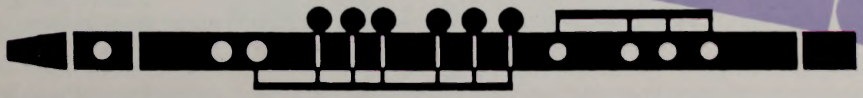
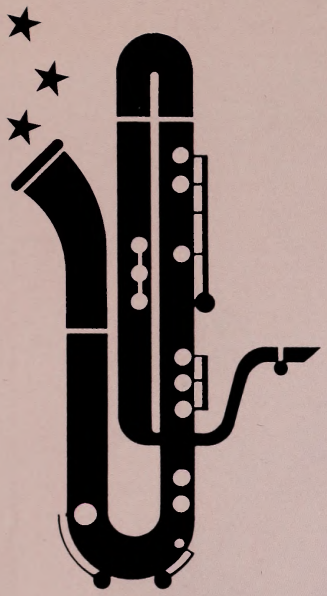
The North Carolina Symphony

1998-1999



The North Carolina Symphony

Gerhardt Zimmermann, Music Director and Conductor
William Henry Curry, Associate Conductor
Jackson Parkhurst, Assistant Conductor and Director of Education
Benjamin Swalin (1901-1989), Conductor 1939-1972



1998-1999 Education Concert Program

George Frideric Handel	Music for the Royal Fireworks Overture, La Paix, Minuets I & II
Franz Joseph Haydn	Symphony No.104 Movement I: Adagio-Allegro con spirito
Roy Harris	When Johnny Comes Marching Home, An American Overture
Duke Ellington	Work to be announced at your concert
Songs: American Folk Song	When Johnny Comes Marching Home Instrumental Group Audience and Orchestra
Frances Scott Key & John Stafford Smith	The Star-Spangled Banner Audience and Orchestra

Additional musical selections will be announced at the concert.

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- Text ... Jackson Parkhurst
- Design ... sarella design
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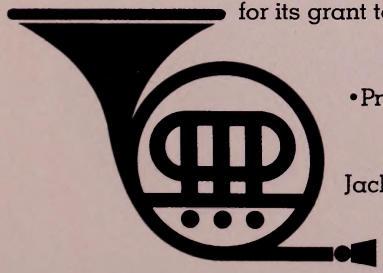

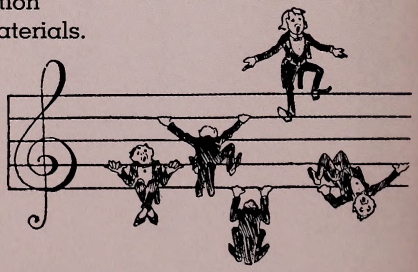

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George Frideric Handel (1685-1759)

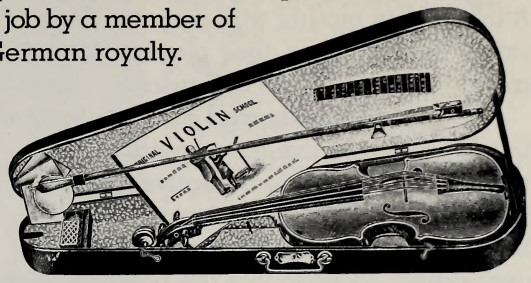
George Frideric Handel was born the same year as the other great Baroque composer, Johann Sebastian Bach. They were both born in Germany, but not in the same place. Handel was born in the German town of Halle (hahl), where his father was barber at the local royal court.

Although Handel's father was a successful barber, he wanted a better life for his son and planned for him to be a lawyer. George Frideric had other ideas and showed an exceptional talent for music when he was very young. Since Handel's father disapproved, his mother smuggled a harpsichord into the attic of their home so that the boy could practice.

When Handel's father finally realized the extent of his son's talent, he allowed him to take lessons on organ, harpsichord, and violin and also allowed him to study composition. However, he still insisted that George become a lawyer and shipped him off to law school at age 17.

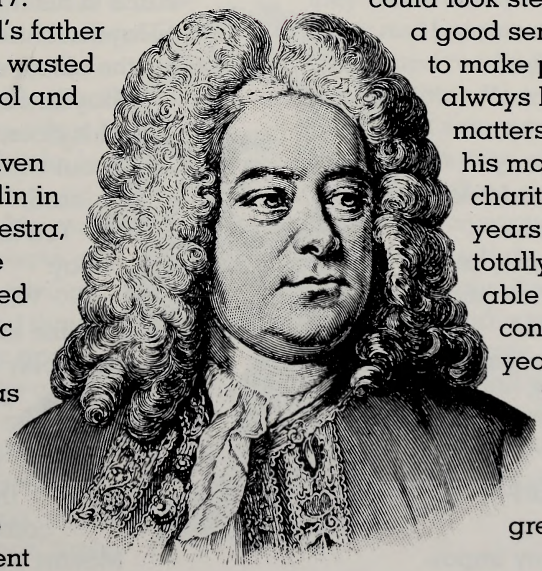
Within a year Handel's father died, and the young man wasted no time leaving law school and heading for the city of Hamburg. Handel was given a job playing second violin in the Hamburg Opera orchestra, and he began to compose operas himself. He learned quickly from all the music he played and heard. By the time he was 20 he was a successful composer.

An Italian prince heard some of Handel's music and invited him to come to Italy. Handel spent five years there and learned to write Italian operas better than the Italians. His fame spread back to Germany, and he was given a job by a member of German royalty.



This was the man who would shortly become King George I of England. Handel had already visited England and was delighted to move there when his employer became king. England was delighted too. The English people loved Handel's music and accepted him as one of their own. He quickly became a British citizen.

Handel was a large man who loved his friends and especially loved good food. He could look stern and sour, but he had a good sense of humor and liked to make people laugh. He was always honest in business matters and was generous with his money, especially to charities. In the last seven years of his life Handel was totally blind, but he was still able to play the organ and to conduct. Handel lived 46 years in England and died there at age 74. He was buried in Westminster Abbey where the English bury their greatest heros.



Franz Joseph Haydn (1732-1809)

It seems that many great composers are born to parents who are amateur musicians. Joseph Haydn (hye'-dn) was no exception. Although his mother was a cook and his father built wagons, they played several instruments and were enthusiastic singers.

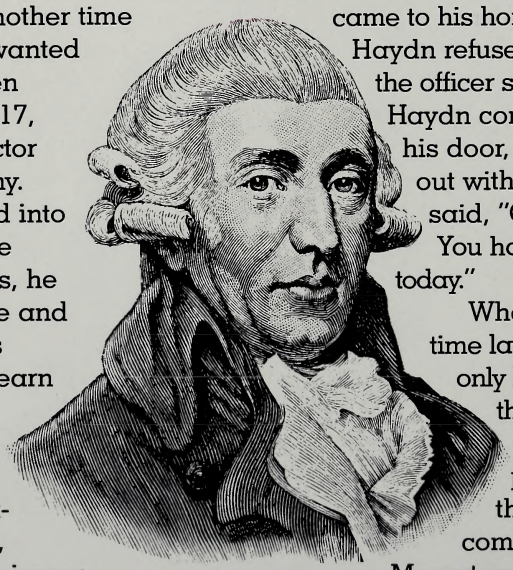
Young Haydn showed an early interest in music. At age five his parents sent him to study with a musical relative named Johann Frankh. Haydn's three years with him were not happy ones, so when the opportunity arose to join the boy's choir at St. Stephen's Church in Vienna, Joseph was more than ready to go.

Even though this was a royal chapel, conditions there were not much better. The choir director was lazy and mean, there was never enough to eat, and the boys were overworked. Haydn, who didn't allow this to upset him too much, managed to stay in constant trouble. Once he climbed some scaffolding so that he could see into the empress's bedroom. Another time he gave a choirboy an unwanted haircut at a rehearsal.When Haydn's voice changed at 17, both he and the choir director were happy to part company.

Although Haydn moved into a leaky attic room which he shared with a family of rats, he loved having his own place and composed during all of his free time. He managed to earn money by playing harpsichord and violin. Metastasio, a famous poet living in a nicer apartment in the same building, introduced Haydn to many important and influential people. Eventually Haydn was given a job with a wealthy prince named Esterhazy for whom he worked for more than 30 years. His one great friend was Mozart who was 24 years younger than he. Haydn taught Mozart composition but admitted that he learned as much as he taught. He once told Mozart's father, "I tell you before God and as an honest man—your son is the greatest composer I know, either personally or by name." Another of his pupils was Ludwig van Beethoven, but they parted ways because they disagreed on everything.

By the time he was 65, Haydn was recognized as the greatest composer in Europe. The Emperor of Austria asked him to compose a new national anthem. Today it is still the national anthem of Germany.

The invasion of Vienna by Napoleon upset the elderly Haydn very much. When a French officer who greatly admired Haydn came to his home to pay him tribute, Haydn refused to see him. But when the officer sang the melody of a Haydn composition just outside his door, the old musician came out with tears in his eyes and said, "God bless you, my son. You have made me very happy today."



When Haydn died a short time later, he was honored not only by his countrymen but by the French conquerors as well. It would have pleased him to know that his favorite piece composed by his friend Mozart was sung at his funeral.

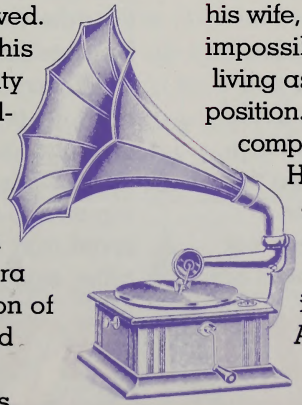
Roy Harris (1898-1979)

When Leroy Ellesworth Harris was a boy, he assumed he would grow up to be a farmer like his father. He was born in a log cabin on a farm in Oklahoma, but when Roy was six, a malaria epidemic broke out in Oklahoma. The Harrises moved to California and built a new farm there.

When Roy finished high school, he acquired a farm of his own and worked hard trying to be a success. World War I broke out a year later, and he was forced to leave his farm and join the army.

Even though farming seemed like the thing he was supposed to do, Roy had been interested in music since he was a small boy. His mother started him on piano and, because he showed talent, hired a teacher to come to the house each week. Later Roy taught himself to play organ and clarinet and played at church and in his school band.

While he was at war, Roy realized that his real love was music and that life was too short not to do what he loved. When he returned home he sold his farm and enrolled in the University of California. While he was in college, Roy made a living driving a dairy truck and delivered three hundred pounds of butter and three hundred dozen eggs a day.



In 1926 one of Harris's orchestra compositions came to the attention of the great American composer and conductor Howard Hanson, who performed the piece several times. Suddenly Harris was famous and was given a prize to study composition in Paris. He was there for three years, but an accident that fractured his spine forced him to return to America. He was confined to a hospital bed for many months. Harris said later that it was a turning point in his development as a composer because he could not sit at a piano and was forced to compose the music that he heard in his head. His career blossomed and he received many commissions to write music.

Even though Roy Harris was serious about his music, he was a very down-to-earth person. He was good at baseball and football when he was young and remained an avid baseball fan his whole life. He was lean and angular, slouched slightly, and never lost his lazy Oklahoma drawl. His favorite meal was steak and potatoes, his hobbies were chess, tennis, and reading, but his favorite pastime was driving cars.

Harris was married in 1936, and he and his wife, Johanna, raised five children. It was impossible then, as it is today, to make a living as a composer, so he also taught composition. He got up every day before dawn to compose and then taught in the afternoons. He conducted performances of his own music, started several music festivals, and won many awards for his compositions. By the time of his death in 1979 he was recognized as one of America's greatest composers.

Duke Ellington (1899-1974)

When he was eight, Edward Kennedy Ellington told his mother, "Your son is going to be the greatest, the grandest, the most glorious Duke." He was not sure why he was going to be famous, but even then young Ellington had the self-confidence he would need to be successful.

He was born into a modestly well-to-do African-American family in Washington, D.C. His father was born in North Carolina and worked his way out of poverty into a good job with the U.S. Navy. His mother was the daughter of a Washington police captain. He was nicknamed "Duke" by a neighborhood friend because of his good manners and elegant behavior.

Although Duke was to become one of America's foremost musicians, he did not show an early interest in music. His mother arranged for him to have piano lessons when he was seven, but Duke preferred playing baseball with his friends.

When he was 13, however, he discovered that if you could play the piano, you would be invited to parties. Since he could not read music, he composed his own ragtime tune, "What You Gonna Do When the Bed Breaks Down?" It worked, and he impressed his friends at parties. It was not long before he discovered that he could not play the same song forever. He did not want to take piano lessons, so Duke went to a local pool hall that had a piano player and watched his fingers. The piano player took an interest in the boy and gave him lessons. Duke worked hard both at playing piano and composing tunes.

In his late teens, Duke realized that there was money to be made as a musician. He organized a dance band, which was immediately successful. By the time he was twenty he was married and had a son. He was a successful band leader in Washington, but to him the only place for real success was New York City. In 1921 he convinced his band to go there with him.

Duke Ellington was a strong-willed, intelligent man. Even though he was self-taught, he worked hard at getting his music played exactly the way it sounded in his head. He once said, "If it sounds good, it is good." Jazz audiences agreed, and over the years the name of Duke Ellington became famous.

Today, one hundred years after his birth, he is considered one of the greatest jazz musicians in American history.

Ellington was a quiet man with the reputation of being a gentleman. He was loved and respected by fans and musicians alike, and when he died in 1974, ten thousand people attended his funeral.

Credit: Photo courtesy of Corbis Bettman

Handel...Music for the Royal Fireworks

Handel wrote his *Music for the Royal Fireworks* in England about the same time that Benjamin Franklin was discovering electricity in America. As the king's official composer, Handel was expected to write appropriate music whenever there was an important event to celebrate, such as a visit from another king, a royal wedding, or a peace treaty.

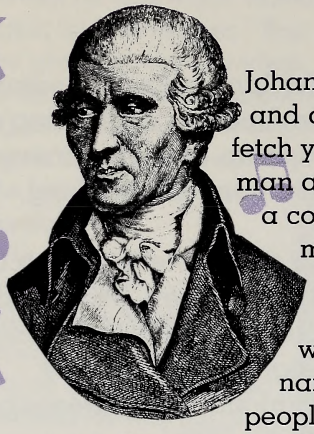
Once, to celebrate a new treaty, the king proclaimed that there would be a fireworks display such as the citizens of London had never seen. Work was begun five months in advance on a huge wooden scaffold for the display, and a famous architect named Servandoni was hired to design and set off the fireworks. Handel was told to write music to sound as glorious as the fireworks would look.

When the long-awaited day arrived, the crowd of more than twelve thousand people jammed London's streets. On a given signal Handel began conducting his music, and Servandoni began lighting his fireworks. The effect was thrilling. The sky was filled with splashes of color from rockets and roman candles, and the beautiful sound of Handel's orchestra gave everyone goose bumps.

For a while everything went as planned, but then some of the fuses began burning too quickly. Others burned too slowly, and some just fizzled out. The whole affair got out of control, with fireworks going off at the wrong time or in the wrong direction. To make matters worse, the huge wooden scaffolding caught fire, sending people fleeing in every direction. In all the commotion not another note of Handel's music was heard. He and the orchestra quit and went home. Mr. Servandoni, angry at all the criticism he was receiving, started waving his sword around and ended up spending the night in jail.

The only part of Handel's music that was heard the night of the disaster was the overture, which we are going to play for you. We will also play the movement entitled La Paix (which means "the peace" in French) and the two minuets. We have decided not to risk the fireworks.

Haydn...Symphony No. 104 in D Major, "London"



One December morning in 1790, a man named Johann Peter Salomon walked into Haydn's home in Vienna and announced, "I am Salomon of London. I have come to fetch you to England." Haydn immediately liked this brash man and was impressed with his confidence. Salomon was a concert producer and promised Haydn a large sum of money if he would come to London, write music, and conduct concerts.

Haydn spent a total of three years in England. They were some of the happiest years of his life. Haydn's name was known all over Europe, and the English people were delighted to have such a famous musician living in their country. They treated him like royalty. They loved his music, and his concerts were always well attended. He made even more money than Salomon promised.

During these three years he composed twelve symphonies, which have become known both as the "London" and "Salomon" symphonies. To make it a little more confusing, Symphony No. 104 is known as *the* London Symphony. It is the last of the twelve symphonies composed in England and also the last symphony Haydn ever composed.

The first movement of Symphony No. 104 begins with a slow introduction. Haydn was famous for his introductions. No one knows why he started putting them at the beginning of symphonies, but one of the reasons may have been to get the audience's attention. During Haydn's time, concerts were large social events where people went to see their friends and be seen. Some treated the music as background for their socializing. It was often difficult to get them to shut up and listen. Often Haydn's introductions were loud and could drown out the noise, but some of the introductions were very quiet and forced the talkers to be quiet and listen. The introductions lasted long enough for the audience to settle down, and then the main part of the movement began.

What effect do you think the introduction to Symphony No. 104 had? Does Haydn use the whole orchestra or only part of it? After the introduction, is the music dark and solemn or bright and lively? Does the introduction give any hints about what will come after it? Why do you think Haydn did it that way?

Harris...When Johnny Comes Marching Home

From the time he was a boy, Roy Harris had a deep love for American folk music. After he had been composing for a while, it occurred to him that he could incorporate American folk music into his own music. *When Johnny Comes Marching Home* was the first composition that he wrote using a folk tune, and he subtitled it "An American Overture."

In fact, the tune of "When Johnny Comes Marching Home" did not originate in America but in Ireland. It was called 'Johnny I Hardly Knew Ye" and described a young girl seeing her injured sweetheart for the first time after his return from war. It was given an American identity in 1863, when it appeared in print with new words by Louis Lambert. (These are the words printed in this book.) This was during the Civil War, and the idea of soldiers coming back home alive was very appealing to their loved ones. The song was sung by people on both sides of the war. After it became popular, it was discovered that a bandmaster from Boston named Patrick S. Gilmore had written the new words and published it under an assumed name.

The form of Harris's overture is what is called Theme and Variations. That means that the composer first lets us hear the theme (tune) all the way through and then starts to play with it. There are no rules for what can be done. The composer might change the harmony, change the tempo, change the key, change notes in the theme, chop up the theme, use pieces of it — in other words, do anything he or she feels like. When you listen to *When Johnny Comes Marching Home*, can you always tell where the tune is? Name some of the ways Roy Harris "varies" the original theme. Is it possible to count how many different variations there are?

Let's Sing

When the North Carolina Symphony comes to play for you, we will play the compositions listed in this book. We will also perform other music that the conductor will announce at the concert.

In addition, we have included a couple of songs for you to learn so that you can sing them with us at the concert."When Johnny Comes Marching Home" can also be played on instruments. We look forward to hearing an instrumental group from your school play this song before we all sing it with the orchestra. For those who will play, here are the directions:

1. Memorize the music so you can watch your conductor.
2. Possible instruments are: recorders, stringed instruments, Orff instruments, bells, xylophones and autoharps.
3. Your teacher will decide how many times you will play it.
4. If autoharps are accompanying, they can play the chords marked above the notes. Play two E minor chords as an introduction.

For singing, everyone needs to memorize these songs.

"When Johnny Comes Marching Home" is a song that has been popular for well over one hundred years and was most popular during times of war. The words, however, say nothing about war. If you did not know the history of the song, would you know that it was a war song? What are things about it that make it a war song? Is it pro-war, anti-war, or neither?

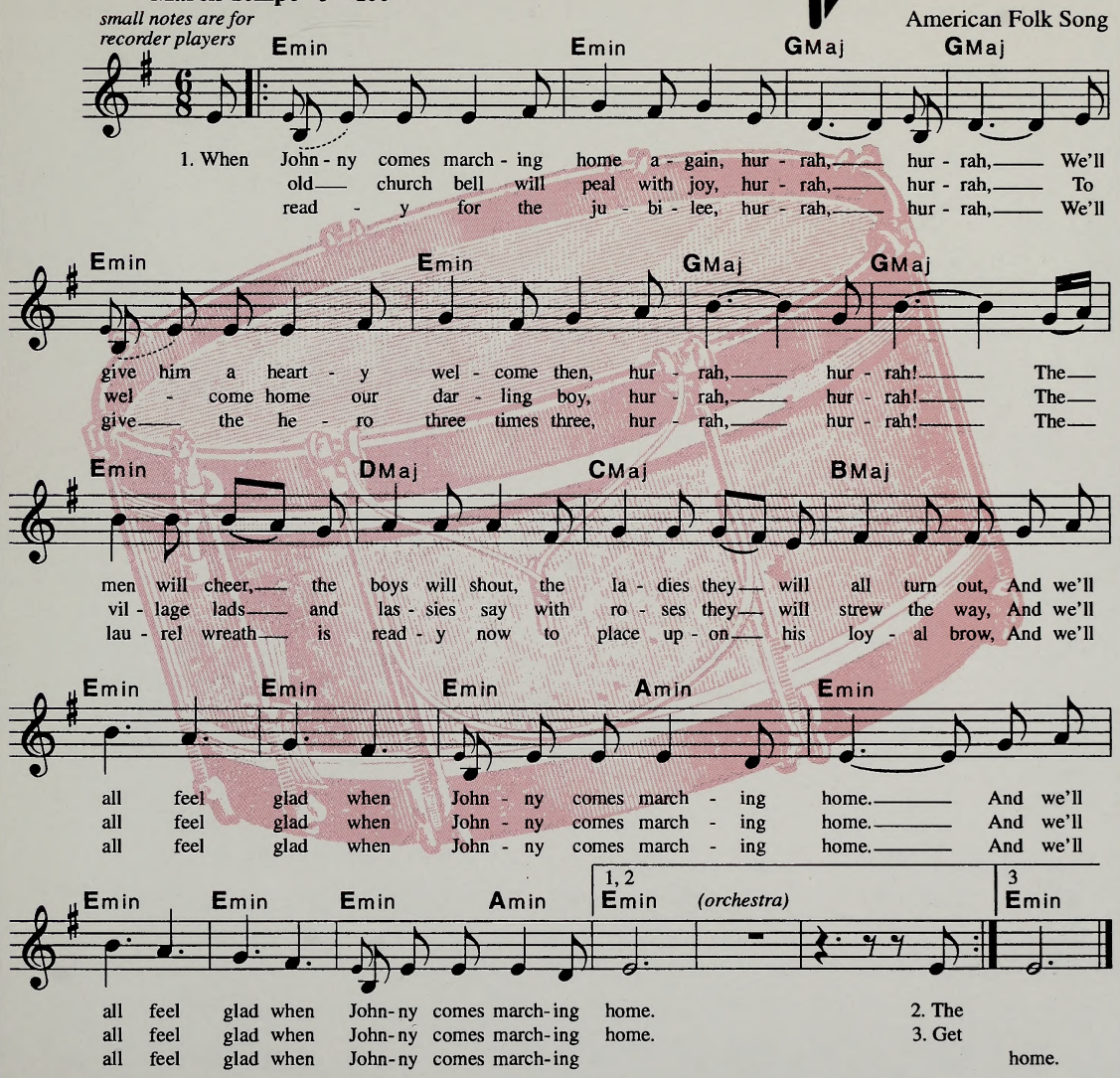
Before it was a song,"The Star-Spangled Banner" was a poem written by a young American named Francis Scott Key. He wrote it in the early morning on September 14, 1814 after an all-night battle on the Chesapeake Bay in Maryland during the War of 1812. British ships were in the harbor firing their cannons at the American Fort McHenry. Key stayed up all night watching "the rocket's red glare, the bombs bursting in air." When dawn came, the fort was undefeated, and the American flag still flew over it. Key was so moved that he wrote the poem on the spot. It was published right away, and someone soon discovered that it would fit a tune that had been written by an Englishman named John Stafford Smith. So, even though England was our enemy at the time, "The Star-Spangled Banner" is half British. It was made our national anthem by an act of Congress on March 3, 1931.

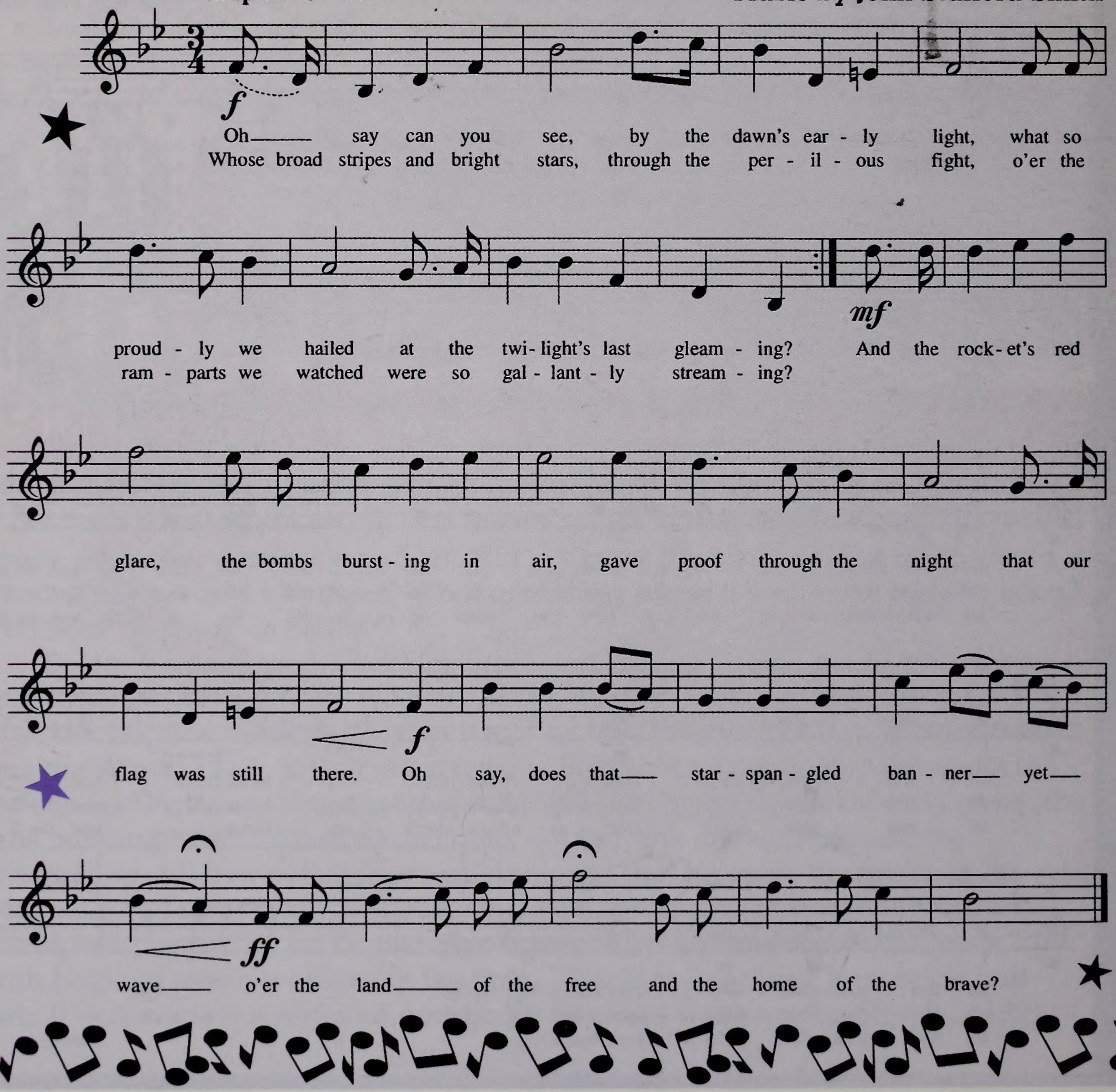
When Johnny Comes Marching Home

March Tempo ♩ = 100

small notes are for recorder players

American Folk Song



The Star-Spangled Banner

Words by Francis Scott Key
Music by John Stafford Smith